DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 425 992 SO 028 672

AUTHOR	Wincek, Jean; O'Malley, Colleen; Ristau, Karen, Ed.; Haney, Regina, Ed.
TITLE	As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity. Module 1: The Faith Community.
INSTITUTION	National Catholic Educational Association, Washington, DC.
ISBN	ISBN-1-55833-152-2
PUB DATE	1997-00-00
NOTE	42p.; For other study modules and the assessment package, see SO 028 673-678.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Catholic Educational Association, Publications Office, 1077 30th Street, N.W., Suite 100, Washington, DC 20007-3852; Tel: 202-337-6232; Fax 202-333-6706 (set of 10, $48 member; $64 nonmember).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Catholic Educators; *Catholic Schools; Catholics; Christianity; Church Related Colleges; Elementary Secondary Education; Faculty Development; Higher Education; Inservice Education; Nuns; *Parochial Schools; Priests; *Religious Education; Religious Organizations; Teaching Guides
IDENTIFIERS	*Catholic Church

ABSTRACT

The As We Teach and Learn program consists of an instrument to assess the Catholic dimension of a school and is designed to be used with study modules in a faculty- meeting format. Module topics include: "Faith Community"; "Faith Development"; "Religion Curriculum Articulation: Faith as the Root of all Instruction"; "Service Learning"; "Prayer and Liturgy Integration"; and "Social Justice." Each module has been created so that it can stand alone or be used with other modules. Each module contains an overview of the complete program, a general introduction, directions and suggestions for using the program, a suggested first faculty meeting outline, an introduction to the module, outlines of five meetings, materials which can be duplicated, a suggested final faculty meeting, and a school planning form. This module, "Faith Community," has teachers and the principal consider a critical element in the Catholic identity of their school. The module invites them to reflect on themselves as members of a faith community. Five group activities ("Storytelling"; "Imaging Connections"; "Listening and Responding"; "Focusing Growth"; and "Determining Action") are provided along with eight appendices. (RJC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

SO

ED 425 992

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

P. Kokus

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

As We Teach and Learn:

Module 01

The Faith Community

Jean Wincek, CSJ,
Colleen O'Malley, CSJ

Recognizing Our Catholic Identity

SO 028 672

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

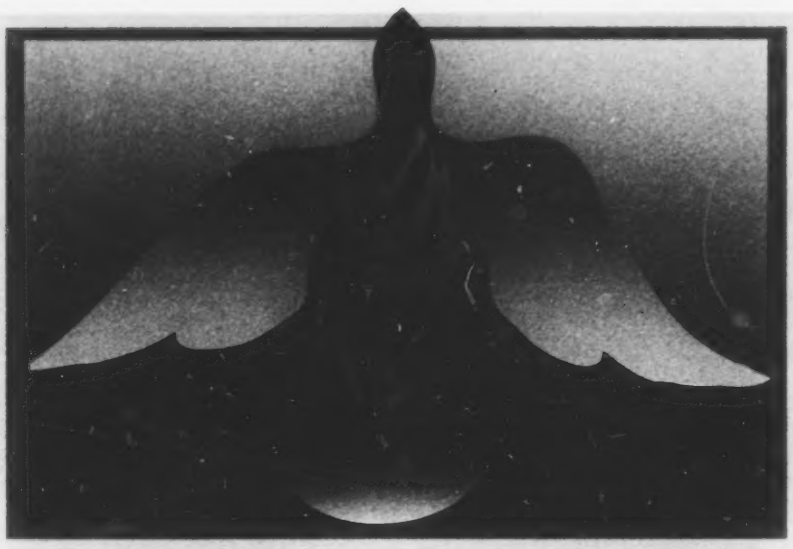
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

The National Catholic Educational Association

Edited by
Karen Ristau and Regina Haney

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

As We Teach and Learn:



Recognizing Our Catholic Identity

Module 01

The Faith Community

Jean Wincek, CSJ
Colleen O'Malley, CSJ

© 1997 NCEA
ISBN: 1-55833-152-2

Edited by
Karen Ristau and Regina Haney

Published by
The National Catholic Educational Association

© 1997 by the National Catholic Educational Association
Washington, DC

ISBN: 1-55833-152-2

All rights reserved. Published 1997. Printed in the United States of America.

Cover design by Mary Twillman and Enigma Concepts
Text design by Enigma Concepts, Wheaton, Maryland

Contents

Introduction v

How to Use This Program vii

Organizing Faculty Meetings ix

Growing as a Faith Community 1

- Background 1
- Design of the Module 2
- 1. Storytelling 5
- 2. Imaging Connections 7
- 3. Listening and Responding 9
- 4. Focusing Growth 13
- 5. Determining Action 15

Coming to the End: Sustaining Identity 17

Assessment of the Catholicity of the School 21

Appendices

- Module Design ..... Appendix A.1
- Mind Map Worksheet ..... Appendix A.2
- Bridging the Gap ..... Appendix B
- Processing Questions ..... Appendix C
- Personal Reflection Questions ..... Appendix D
- Reflection Response Sheet ..... Appendix E
- Action Plan Form ..... Appendix E.1
- Evaluation Sheet ..... Appendix E.2

Order Form 35

Introduction

From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illumined by the light of faith and having its own unique characteristics, an environment permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom...

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School

This quotation states an ideal each school seeks to obtain. In the daily routine of school life, the ideal may occasionally seem beyond reach, but parents, children, teachers, parish members, leaders and indeed, the community, expect the Catholic school will somehow be different from other schools. It is, after all, a Catholic school.

Capturing the essence of a Catholic school means being able to define and identify the signs which mark the school as Catholic. It means being able to describe and see in practice the Catholic identity of the school and most of all, understanding the deep underlying significance of those practices. It means being able to explain and demonstrate a living answer to the question, "How is this school Catholic?"

The answer does not often come quickly. Which activities, lessons, events and processes provide the example? What are the right words to explain? Catholic identity rests not only in the curriculum, activities and school policies, but also in the part of the school that is not rational, certain or linear. The Catholic identity, then, also is found in ceremonies, in the environment and in the way people interact with one another. It is here one sees the values and the faith dimension of the school. In many places, the Catholic identity almost seeps through the woodwork. The distinctive patterns and beliefs are so ingrained they are unconscious or taken for granted. In other places, they are not well-established; while in other schools, they are articulated clearly and celebrated publicly.

The National Catholic Educational Association identified "Catholic Identity of the Catholic School" as a major topic as Catholic schools enter the 21st century. Identity issues were addressed at the National Congress on Catholic Schools for the Twenty-First Century. The Congress produced statements for the future direction of the schools. NCEA is committed to the belief statements of the Congress stated here:

- The Catholic school is an integral part of the church's mission to proclaim the gospel, build faith communities, celebrate through worship and serve others.
- The commitment to academic excellence, which fosters the intellectual development of faculty and students, is an integral part of the mission of the Catholic school.
- The Catholic school is an evangelizing, educational community.
- The spiritual formation of the entire school community is an essential dimension of the Catholic school's mission.
- The Catholic school is a unique faith-centered community, which integrates thinking and believing in ways that encourage intellectual growth, nurture faith and inspire action.

- The Catholic school is an experience of the church's belief, tradition and sacramental life.
- The Catholic school creates a supportive and challenging climate which affirms the dignity of all persons within the school community.

As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity provides a process to convert belief statements into direction and action.

The program has been designed to be used in a variety of ways, following a timeline chosen by the participants. It is intended to help the faculty celebrate the already visible signs of Catholicity and actively create within the fabric of the school an even deeper commitment to the lived tradition of the gospel.

Many people contributed ideas, energy, encouragement and support to the development of this project. The Executive Committee of the Supervision, Personnel and Curriculum section of the Chief Administrators of Catholic Education Department articulated both the need for more resources and the original ideas for the format. Remembering the success of the *Vision and Values* program, committee members asked for materials that would reflect the process orientation and the foundational content that *Vision and Values* offered to school faculties. It is hoped that this program fits those requirements.

Planning, which included people from regions across the country, was made possible by support of the Father Michael J. McGivney Fund. Critic readers and pilot schools (elementary and secondary) contributed suggestions, further refinement and encouragement. They made certain the program would be presented in a "user-friendly" format. We are grateful for this support.

A final word of thanks is due Patty Myers-Kearns, our attentive and thoughtful NCEA administrative assistance, who managed to keep multiple manuscripts, their writers and the editors organized.

The work of teaching and learning, carefully done by communities of people who incorporate the characteristics found in this project, will certainly be a foundation toward fulfilling the ideal of a "new environment...illumined by the light of faith."

Regina Haney
Executive Director of the National Association of Boards of Catholic Education
Assistant Executive Director of the Chief Administrators of Catholic Education
Washington, D.C.

Karen Ristau
Professor, Director of Programs in Educational Leadership, University of Saint Thomas, St. Paul, MN

How to Use This Program

The program consists first of an instrument to assess the Catholic dimension of the school followed by study modules designed in a faculty-meeting format. Following the assessment, leaders will be able to select an appropriate study module. Specific study modules have been designed for each of the six characteristics examined in the assessment. They are:

- Faith Community
- Faith Development
- Religion Curriculum Articulation
- Service Learning
- Prayer and Liturgy Integration
- Social Justice

As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity has been intentionally designed to be flexible. Participants should make critical decisions to fit their individual school needs.

Therefore,

- The timeline is open-ended. No one knows the local school agenda better than the local school leadership team. School teams should schedule the use of this program as an integral part of their faculty meetings, while still mindful of other necessary business. Perhaps, one meeting a month could be planned around a segment of a particular module, or some part of a module could be done at each meeting. Larger parts of the whole module could be used for a faculty retreat. Further, leadership teams will know how many meetings can be scheduled. It is preferable to move slowly and thoroughly through the modules rather than feel compelled to "finish." An in-depth study over time may provide a better learning experience for faculty members.
- The sequence is fluid. Each module is complete in itself and does not depend on a sequence for learning. After using the assessment tool with the faculty, select the module which best fits your particular needs. You may already be focusing on a particular topic and find one of the study modules helpful. Some schools often select a "theme" for the year, or all the educational units in the school may wish to emphasize a special area. One of the study modules may prove especially helpful and can be used along with other programs.

As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity is made up of seven components:

a) An assessment package of ten tests, which pinpoint where your school may need to focus;

b) Six study modules designed in faculty-meeting format that will help the development in a specific area.

The Assessment

This assessment consists of questions designed to help you identify areas where your school community needs more development or better understanding. Ten copies of the test are in each packet. Scoring directions also are included.

Modules

Each module has been created so that it can stand alone or be used with other modules. Each module contains:

- An Overview of the Complete Program
- General Introduction
- Direction and Suggestions for Using the Program
- A Suggested First Faculty Meeting Outline
- Introduction to the Module
- Outlines of Five Meetings
- Materials Which can be Duplicated
- A Suggested Final Faculty Meeting
- School Planning Form

The various appendices in each module are meant to be photocopied. This, however, is not true of the rest of the program. The NCEA asks that you order more copies of the modules or assessment if they are needed.

Every module also includes an action and evaluation form which can be duplicated. These should be distributed to everyone working on the project to outline objectives and accomplishments over a period of time.

Order Forms

At the back of this book is an order form for both the assessment and the modules.

Organizing Faculty Meetings

Karen Ristau

Purpose

To celebrate accomplishments in all areas of the school, to begin a common reflection on the Catholic identity of the school and to identify areas of Catholic identity as a focus for the following year.

Background/Resources

1. This first meeting should be held in late spring or as the last meeting of the school year, but planned well ahead of time. The outcomes of this meeting will provide direction for the beginning of the next school year.
2. During the meeting, the group will celebrate the accomplishments of the year and will plan an area of focus for the coming year.
3. During the second half of the meeting, even though the discussion certainly will include a critique of the current state of the school, *do not let the tone of the meeting become disparaging*. Maintain a positive climate throughout.
4. The outline presented here suggests what may be done. The meeting planner should adapt the outline to fit the needs of the particular school community. For instance, you may wish to include many people or limit the process to the faculty.
5. Resources include:
   a. *Catholic Identity of Catholic Schools* by J. Heft and C. Reck (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1992).
   b. *The Church That Was a School: Catholic Identity and Catholic Education in the United States Since 1790* by R. O'Gorman (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1987).
   c. *Vision and Values* manuals (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association).

      This NCEA program, while not currently in publication, served as the basis for *As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity*. The manuals are packed full of ideas for discussion, assessment, planning and reflecting upon the Catholic identity of the school. The manual has prayer services, as well as activities for group processes.
   d. *What Makes a School Catholic?* edited by Francis D. Kelly, S.T.L., Ph.D. (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1991).

Preparation

1. Read through the entire plan in order to decide exactly how to use the ideas presented here.
2. Consider using a planning team for decisions about this meeting.

3. Decide who should participate: faculty only; faculty plus pastor, board chair, parent group chair, others. This might be an excellent time to include staff members, secretaries, custodians, etc., who play important roles in maintaining the culture of the school.
4. Establish a timeline.
5. Invite all those who will attend.
6. Distribute to all faculty members and others a form which asks them to respond to the following question: What have we done well this year?

   Encourage people to look at the whole school in its entirety.

   You might use the Strengths Section on the School Planning Form here.
7. Distribute to all faculty members and others "The Assessment of the Catholic Dimension of the School" (one for each participant).
8. Allow one week for faculty and others to return the assessment data to some pre-designated person (e.g., the faculty secretary, the principal, a member of the planning team).
9. Compile the data from the assessment forms. Prepare the results in such a way that all attending the meeting may review the information (e.g., print on newsprint, hang on the wall, make overhead transparencies, create a video).
10. Read through the process for the meeting and assign duties.

Process

1. Open the meeting with a prayer service. Appendix A is a suggestion, which should be adapted to the local community.
2. Do an assessment of the year.
   a. Everyone should have a copy of the evaluation results. If posted on newsprint, the room should be arranged so that all participants can easily see the results.
   b. Discuss and celebrate what has been accomplished. Allow time for conversation. Reminisce a little. Take time for a good laugh. Let people tell stories. Give a "box of rocks" award to the person who survived the year's biggest faux pas.
   c. Review and evaluate the results of the "Assessment of the Catholic Dimension of the School."
3. Using the Focus and Next Step sections of the School Planning Form, select an area of focus for the next school year. Limit the choice to only a single area or to a very few areas.
4. Select a planning team to identify responsibilities, actions, timelines, expected results. This group should be ready to suggest plans to the whole faculty at the fall in-service meetings, so they will need to work over the summer. Since ownership of any project is a key factor in its success, let the team include anyone who volunteers.
5. Assign summer reading. Suggest a short, common reading for all—either from the list or the module you will be using.

Summer Planning

1. Gather a planning team.
   a. Set timelines for what is to be done next and when.
   b. Set responsibilities—who will do what?
2. Plan a faculty meeting for the beginning of school, using a module selected from this program.

Prayer Service

Opening Prayer

We praise you today, gentle God, for your presence among us, as we find ourselves finishing another academic year. We pray today, hoping to become more aware of the wholeness and holiness which is ours by our identity as your followers, by the work we have been called to do, and by the power of the dreams which live in us. Remind us it is through who we are and do that others will come to know you. Teach us to turn to you for the comfort you extend as we struggle to be faithful. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Come. You have my Father's blessing! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me, in prison and you came to visit me. Then the just will ask him: 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or see you thirsty and give you to drink? When did we welcome you away from home or clothe you in your nakedness? When did we visit you when you were ill or in prison?' The king will answer them: 'I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brother or sister, you did it for me.' (Matthew 25: 34-44)

Reflection

Ask the group to reflect on all the times during the year they:

- helped others;
- gave extra time to a student;
- comforted a parent;
- paid attention to the less popular;
- helped another teacher;
- had students write to sick classmates;
- went to a funeral;
- gave fresh energy to teaching a lesson;
- held onto a sense of humor;
- taught someone to dance and sing;

- shared their faith journey;
- thanked people;
- gave a compliment;
- did one of many other things to bring joy to the life of another.

Let us give thanks for the gifts you have, which enable you to teach and help others.

Let us pray:

Lord, we marvel that you, in your divine wisdom, have chosen us to be instruments of your love. We are thankful for the work you have given us; work that engages and ennobles us, that gives us dignity and creative challenges, that calls us to growth and fullness of life. Help us claim our strength and need. When discouragement and fatigue come, give us laughter and support. Grant that we might stand in wisdom, for it is in wisdom that we are one with You, our God. We ask this through Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Meeting Agenda

Concluding Prayer

God of faithfulness,
we come to you at the end of a day
and find ourselves needing to begin again
on new projects and new ideas.
We are in need of energy and renewed hope.
What change are we able to effect
by all our words or actions or prayer?
What do our efforts matter?
We are in need of your grace
to unsettle and redirect our hearts.
We are in need of your power
to rekindle and sustain our passion for justice.
We are in need of your love
that we might recognize the ever-present possibility
for change and conversion and growth.
We believe your Spirit is at work in our world.
Give us eyes of faith
that we might see such wonders in our midst
and the courage to live in hope.

—from *More than Words by Schaffran and Kozak*, (New York: Crossroads, 1991)

Growing as a Faith Community

Jean Wincek, CSJ
Colleen O'Malley, CSJ

In this series of five faculty meetings, teachers and the principal consider a critical element in the Catholic identity of their school: faith community. The module invites them to reflect on themselves as members of a faith community.

The word "community" derives from the Latin "communis," meaning to hold in common. Throughout the module, each person examines both what he or she holds in common with other members of the school faith community and how he or she contributes to the life and vitality of the faith community through mature personal presence, cooperative relationships and honest communication.

Early Christian communities were recognized by their love for one another. In school faith communities, this love reveals itself not only in how teachers interact with students, parents and other members of the school community, but also in how they work side by side with one another and with the school administrator. When teachers clarify and articulate the values they hold dear and model these values in their personal and professional lives, the faith community is strengthened and teachers have reason to celebrate the life and ministry they share.

Background

Current educational literature speaks of schools as communities of learners. The concept, community of learners, highlights the realization that students learn best when adults model behaviors significant to the community. Among their most treasured values, communities of learners name respect for and service to others, cooperative behaviors, creative and critical thinking and striving to achieve one's personal best. Adults in the community are life-long learners who guide and encourage students in their educational journey. The adage, "What you do speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you are saying" pervades the atmosphere in a community of learners.

In a Catholic school, not only can teachers and students form a community of learners, but also they can intertwine their lives at a deeper level and recognize they are a community of faith. It is the faith dimension of the community that gives a Catholic school its unique culture. As adults in Catholic schools, teachers and administrators invite one another to grow as mature, faith-filled human beings. They recognize that the same Creator Spirit who came upon Jesus as he began his ministry binds them together. When they gather as a Christian community, they acknowledge the presence and power of the Spirit in their lives. They challenge one another to establish an atmosphere in their schools where students can grow in personal integrity, strive for academic excellence and deepen their faith. In a faith community, the notions of communication, relationship and maturity take on new dimensions.

Communication

Communication is at the heart of a faith community. Communication is more than talking with another. It implies actively and honestly listening to oneself, to others and to God. Persons who understand and practice the art of listening have a healthy sense of themselves. A deep sense of self derives from self-awareness and self-acceptance. People develop a healthy sense of self as significant persons in their lives love and listen to them and as they listen to God in prayer.

Relationship

A faith community is a group of people in relationship, bonded by the Creator Spirit and in communion with themselves, with the earth, with others and with God. The most profound Christian symbol of this communion is the banquet table where people break the bread which they believe is the body of Christ. Jesus advised the women and men who followed him that before approaching the table, they first must mend relationships with their sisters and brothers. The ebb and flow of life calls persons in a faith community to continual growth in self-awareness and self-acceptance, as well as to deeper respect for and generous service to others.

Maturity

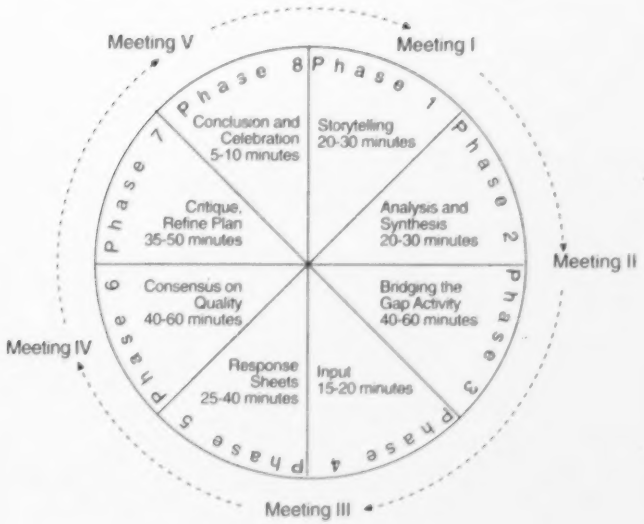
Healthy self-awareness and an openness to others' needs are signs of maturity. Adults in a faith community practice and model maturity as they create an environment which prizes cooperative behavior, where inclusiveness and hospitality are the norm and where love of God expresses itself in love of others. Each school articulates an understanding of its way of life as a faith community in a unique way. Schools may emphasize different aspects of their Catholic identity. Regardless of these differences, each school expresses the hallmarks of its identity on three levels: the personal and interpersonal level; the instructional level; and the organizational level. The design of this module encourages each faculty to articulate qualities which are uniquely emphasized as faith community dimensions in its school. It asks the faculty to plan for the strengthening of these qualities on all three levels.

Design of the Module

This module is designed as an eight-phase process, which moves the participants around a cycle from finding meaning to conceptualizing, to experimenting, to creating, to celebrating. The module honors the diversity of learning preferences of participants. Some participants will be more engaged when the meeting provides opportunity for discussion. Some will prefer to listen and to synthesize new ideas, while others will want to move quickly to making practical applications. Still others will be eager to contribute new and creative ideas and to celebrate the accomplishments of the group. It is important that participants understand and acknowledge that they may be more comfortable with some phases of the process than with others. However, it also is important for them to understand that they can both honor one another's uniqueness and build trust within their faith community even as they move through this process.

Phases 1 and 2 form the first meeting. At the second meeting, the faculty uses Phase 3. Meeting three includes Phases 4 and 5. In the fourth meeting, participants go through Phase 6. The fifth and final meeting of the module consists of Phases 7 and 8. Each meeting lasts from 40 to 60 minutes, depending primarily on the size of the faculty. The principal or a facilitator leads the faculty in this process.

Figure 01



To maintain continuity in the process, the ideal time between meetings is one or two weeks. The exception to this timing is between the fourth and fifth meetings (Phase 6 and Phases 7 and 8). A faculty committee needs time to develop a proposed action plan at this point in the process. This group may need three to four weeks to complete its work.

The diagram in Figure 01 (also a handout in Appendix A.1) gives an overview of the eight phases and how these phases are incorporated into five meetings. The cycle is based on the 4MAT® System, developed by Bernice McCarthy, Ph.D., Excel, Inc. (23385 Old Barrington Road, Barrington, IL 60010).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1. Storytelling

Purpose

To strengthen the faith community through storytelling, leading to a richer understanding of qualities of the mature Christian person.

Resources

Room arrangement: tables with five chairs around each table.

For each table:

- decorative candle
- table number
- chart paper
- markers
- masking tape

For each participant:

- index card designating table number
- copy of *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 9, pp. 18-19, included in kit. (This book would be an appropriate gift for each faculty member. See order form included with kit.)

For the facilitator:

- overhead projector
- transparency and pen

Preparation

1. Put a decorative candle and a table number in the center of each table.
2. To achieve a random seating arrangement, ask each person to draw a numbered index card as he or she enters the room. The number indicates the table at which the person sits for the first two meetings.

Process

1. Begin the meeting by inviting the group to reflect on coming together as a unique faith community with a critical mission.
2. After a moment of reflection, ask the person at each table who has been on the staff longest to light the candle. This ritual brings to mind the presence of the Holy Spirit in the group's midst.
3. Continue by using *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 9, pp. 18- 19, through the "Our Father."
4. Start Phase 1 (20-30 minutes).

Storytelling:

a. Ask each participant: Think of a time in your life when you have said to yourself, "When I grow up (or someday), I want to be like [name a person]."

—Who was that person(s)?

—Why did you want to be like that person(s)?

b. Listen to each story, noting the qualities mentioned in the story. You may ask clarifying questions, but do not discuss the story at this point.

5. Continue with Phase 2 (20-30 minutes).

a. Analysis

— Ask each table group: Did you hear any common characteristics of the people whom you admired and wanted to be like?

— Discuss these characteristics and list them on a large piece of chart paper.

b. Synthesis

With the whole group, create a total group web or mind map which reflects everyone's perceptions. At the center is "The Mature Christian Person" and around it are the characteristics suggested by each group. This may be accomplished by building the web or mind map on a transparency on an overhead projector, with each group contributing a word until everyone's words are on the web.

Another method is to have each group comment on its discussion and post its chart paper on the wall where everyone can see it.

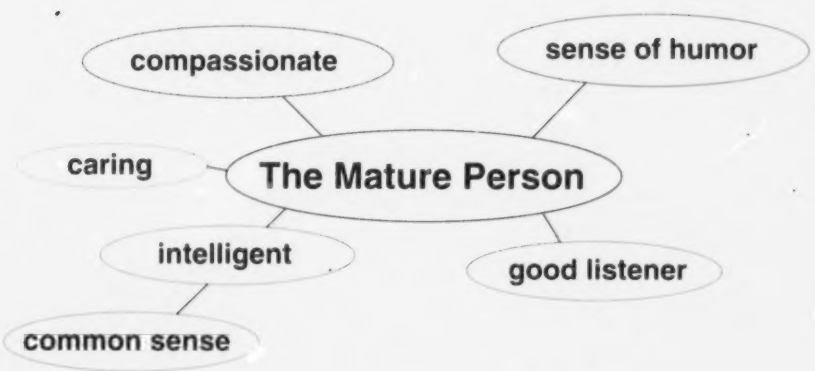
The box below is an example of a mind map or web (mind map worksheet in Appendix A.2).

Adjournment

1. Conclude the meeting by inviting participants to pray together the final prayer of Day 9, p. 19, *The Prayer of Catholic Educators.*
2. Ask the person at each table who has been on the staff the least time to extinguish the candle.

Figure 02

Example of a mind map or web



2. Imaging Connections

Purpose

To enable participants to articulate and image the connections between the mature person and the faith community.

Resources

Room arrangement: same as Meeting #1

For each table:

- decorative candle
- chart paper
- masking tape
- table number
- markers
- copy of "Bridging the Gap" activity (Appendix B)

For each participant:

- *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, pp. 2-3

Process

1. Begin by inviting the group to reflect on how they, as unique individuals, bring a diversity of gifts to the school faith community.
2. After a moment of reflection, ask the person at each table who has been on the staff longest to light the candle. This ritual brings to mind the presence of the Holy Spirit in the group's midst.
3. Continue by using *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 1, pp. 2-3, through the "Our Father."
4. After the "Our Father," ask teachers to give one another a moment of silence.
5. Then, ask each person at each table to say to the person on the right, "What I admire most about you is..." or "A gift you bring to this community is..."
6. Start Phase 3 (40-60 minutes).
   a. Review the characteristics of the Mature Christian Person articulated by the staff on the mind map or web developed by the participants during the last meeting.
   b. Ask each table group to prepare to pantomime or role-play or illustrate an activity that the mature person engages in that strengthens the school community ("Bridging the Gap" activity, Appendix B).
   c. Encourage teachers to draw their examples from real-life situations, including relationships and interactions among faculty members, as well as with children or parents, rather than make-believe situations.
   d. The process and conversation that takes place around their decision of what to present to the group is as important as the end product.
   e. Give approximately 15 minutes for the groups to prepare their pantomime, role-play or illustration.
   f. Each group then presents its pantomime, role-play or illustration to the total group.

g. When each group has completed the presentation, ask for volunteers to tell about the group's process (for example, why the group chose to do what it did and how participants worked together as a group).

Adjournment

1. Conclude the meeting by inviting participants to pray together the final prayer of Day 1, p. 3, *The Prayer of Catholic Educators.*
2. Ask the person at each table who has been on the staff the least time to extinguish the candle.

3. Listening and Responding

Purpose

To listen to and to process ideas on the connections between personal maturity and the faith community.

Resources

Room arrangement: same as Meeting #1

For each table:

- decorative candle
- table number
- basket

For each participant:

- copy of *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 31, pp. 62-63
- business-size envelope
- pen or pencil
- index card indicating new table number
- Personal Reflection Questionnaire (Appendix D)
- Reflection Response Sheet (Appendix E)

For facilitator:

- VCR and monitor
- "Teamwork" video (Tager, M.J., producer and director, Great Performance, Beaverton, Ore., 1990, telephone (503) 520-9550)
- For additional background, see:

  Robbins, H. (1990) *Turf Wars: Moving from Competition to Collaboration;*

  Senge, P.M. (1990) *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. NY: Doubleday;

  Senge, P.M., et al. (1994) *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*. NY: Doubleday.

Preparation

1. Put a decorative candle and a table number in the center of each table.
2. To achieve a random seating arrangement, ask each person to draw a numbered index card as he or she enters the room. The number indicates the table at which the person sits for the last three meetings.

Process

1. Begin the meeting by inviting the group to reflect on how they understand the relationship between the mature Christian person and the faith community.
2. After a moment of reflection, ask the person at each table who has been on the staff longest to light the candle. This ritual brings to mind the presence of the Holy Spirit in the group's midst.

3. Continue by using *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 31, pp. 62-63), through the "Our Father."
4. After the "Our Father," invite participants to give one another a greeting of peace.
5. Start Phase 4 (15-20 minutes).

Input

A guest speaker or the principal or facilitator may draw ideas from the notes provided in the "Introduction" and "Background" sections of this module, from the books *Turf Wars* or the *Fifth Discipline*, and/or participants may view the video "Teamwork" or another available video emphasizing the qualities and characterisitcs of the faith community.

The video presents such nature scenes as trees, deer, waterfalls and lakes. The narrator says:

> *...Teamwork flourishes when members communicate feelings and resolve conflict....What is a trusting relationship? According to one writer, it is the knowledge that you will not deliberately or accidentally, consciously or unconsciously, take unfair advantage of me. It means that I can put my situation at the moment, my status and my self-esteem in this group, our relationship, my job, my career, even my life, in your hands with complete confidence. The best teams also are clear on their goals and how each person contributes to reaching them....There is something special that happens when people work well together, a synergy that multiplies effort, that enhances contributions and brings out the best in each of us....*

6. Continue with Phase 5 (25-40 minutes).
   a. Begin this Phase with time for individual reflection on the "Processing Questions" before beginning the discussion (handout in Appendix C):

   —If participants saw the video, reflect on:

   What images did you see in the video?

   Why were these images used?

   What did the video say to you about our life together as a faith community?

   —If participants did not see the video, reflect on:

   What did the speaker say that surprised you?

   What did the speaker say that challenged you?

   What did the speaker say that you would like to challenge?

   What did the speaker say to you about our life together as a faith community?

   b. After a few minutes of reflection, begin a large group discussion on the "Processing Questions."

   c. Once that discussion is concluded, distribute the "Personal Reflection Questions" (Appendix D). Give time for each person to reflect on the questionnaire and to look at its implications from the personal/interpersonal, instructional and organizational perspectives:

   —Personal perspective: how do I see myself?

—Interpersonal perspective: How do I see myself in relationship to others?

—Instructional perspective: How does what and how I teach reflect these qualities?

—Organizational perspective: How do my attitudes and behaviors strengthen or weaken the school faith community?

After some moments of reflection time, depending on the trust level of the group, the facilitator may wish to invite participants to share their responses with a partner.

d. After the group has reflected and/or shared their responses with a partner, ask each person to write reflections on three questions (handout in Appendix E):

—How do I want people in this faith community to remember me?

—What do I most want to pass on to the students in this faith community?

—How can this school as an organization better reflect who we are as a faith community?

e. Allow time for small group and total faculty discussion of these questions.

f. Ask each person to return to the "Reflection Response Sheet" and to write a commitment to himself or herself to work on one area of personal/interpersonal growth.

g. Have each person place the "Reflection Response Sheet" in a self-addressed envelope.

Adjournment

End this session by inviting participants to put their sealed envelopes into the basket on their tables, by praying together the concluding prayer from the opening ritual, Day 31, *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, p. 63, and by having the person at each table who has been on the staff the least time extinguish the candle.

(The sealed envelopes should be kept in a safe place. When the faculty decides to begin working on a new aspect of its Catholic identity, the envelopes should be mailed back to the writers.)

4. Focusing Growth

Purpose

To agree upon one quality of faith community life which will be the focus of growth.

Resources

Room arrangement: same as Meeting #1

For each table:

- decorative candle
- large chart paper
- masking tape
- table number
- markers

For each participant:

- copy of *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 30, pp. 60-61
- Action Plan Form (Appendix F.1)

Process

1. Begin by inviting the group to reflect with gratitude on the gifts they have been given as a faith community.
2. After a moment of reflection, ask the person at each table who has been on the staff longest to light the candle. This ritual brings to mind the presence of the Holy Spirit in the group's midst.
3. Continue by using *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 30, pp. 60-61, through the "Our Father."
4. After the "Our Father," ask teachers to give one another a moment of silence.
5. Then, have each person say to the person on his or her left, "You modeled for me what it means to be a member of a faith community when you..." or "I am grateful for your presence on our faculty because..."
6. Start Phase 6 (40-60 minutes).
   a. Have each small group brainstorm ideas on qualities of the mature faith community and write them on large chart paper. Have each group choose from its list two qualities of the mature faith community which they believe would enhance the life of the school community. Ideas might include conflict resolution, cooperation, hospitality or verbal expressions of respect for others.
   b. Ask each group to write the two qualities it has chosen on chart paper and post it.
   c. Assist the groups in coming to consensus on one quality of faith community life, which will be a focus for growth.

   In working towards consensus:

   1. Ask the participants to examine the qualities each group has listed on the chart paper. Does any quality appear on several lists? Does any quality bring to mind immediate ways to achieve it?

2. To decide which quality will be the focus for growth, rather than asking a yes-no vote, ask:
   — Do you strongly believe this quality should be our focus for growth?
   — Even if this is not your first choice, can you support this quality as a focus for growth?
   — Are you unable to support this quality as a focus for growth?
3. If, after significant time spent on discussion, a few participants cannot support the quality as a focus for growth, the facilitator may pursue other options:
   — Ask for more discussion.
   — Move to another quality and try to obtain a consensus.
   — Recognize that there is a consensus minus the number of persons unable to support this quality and continue the process as outlined.
   — Ask for representatives to develop an action plan on how to address the issue on the personal, interpersonal, instructional and organizational levels (see Appendix F.1).

Adjournment

1. To conclude this meeting, invite those who volunteered to develop an action plan to come to the front of the group.
2. Have all other teachers stand and extend their hands over the volunteers, silently asking the blessing of the Spirit on their work.
3. Then, have all pray together the concluding prayer from the opening ritual, Day 30, p. 61, *The Prayer of Catholic Educators.*

(The next meeting should be planned so as to give volunteers enough time to meet and to develop an action plan. Invite faculty members to give suggestions to volunteers.)

5. Determining Action

Purpose

To agree upon an action plan which will strengthen the faith community dimension of the school's Catholic identity.

Resources

Room arrangement: same as Meeting #1

For each table:

- decorative candle
- table number

For each participant:

- copy of *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 6, pp. 12-13
- copy of proposed Action Plan

For the facilitator:

- overhead projector
- transparencies and pens
- treats such as veggies, cheese and crackers or dessert for the faculty to enjoy at the end of the meeting

Process

1. Begin this session by using *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 6, pp. 12-13.
2. Ask the person at each table who has been on the staff the longest to light the table candle.
3. Then, use the first half of the prayer, through the "Reflection" on page 12.
4. Start Phase 7 (35-50 minutes).

   The task of this phase is to critique and refine the work done between meetings.

   a. The representatives come back to the total faculty with a proposal for building the Catholic identity of the school through concentrating on growth in one area of the life of the faith community. The proposal should include implementation strategies.

   b. The committee presents the plan and answers questions.

   c. The whole group critiques and refines the plan and accepts it as one they are willing to implement.

   d. Proposed modifications and changes should be written on a transparency so they are clear to everyone.

   e. The acceptance of the action plan may take the form of a vote, of working toward consensus, or of each table discussing the ideas and saying as a table whether or not the plan is acceptable.

Adjournment—Phase 8 (5-10 minutes)

1. Conclude the session with a prayer of commitment to the plan for building the school's faith community through working on personal/interpersonal, instructional and organizational aspects of its life. Use *The Prayer of Catholic Educators*, Day 6, p. 13, the second half of the opening prayer as the concluding prayer.
2. Provide a treat for the faculty to enjoy at the end of the meeting as a celebration of concluding the module on building a faith community.

Follow-Up

1. As a follow-up to this session, the principal could send a letter to the broader community (e.g., parents, parishioners), describing the process the faculty went through to arrive at its plan and asking the community to pray for the school faith community as it commits itself to growth. As implementation of the plan continues, include articles about its progress in the school's publications.
2. The principal or a faculty committee monitors the progress toward reaching the goals using Appendix F.2. When these goals are achieved, the faculty could choose another quality it wishes to work on to enhance the life of the faith community by using the process in Phases 6 and 7.

Coming to the End: Sustaining Identity

Institutions, like people, are not static. There is growth and change around some core that defines who we are—our identity. While there is an essential, recognizable "something" about a person, or an institution, when there is life, there is change as well. People are always gaining new knowledge and understanding, acquiring skills and shedding bad habits. We are always becoming—becoming more of who we were meant to be. The same is true of an institution because it is made up of human beings. In that sense, the Catholic school will always be an institution in process, defining and redefining its identity. A school can not complete a program designed to deepen awareness of its Catholic identity and then collectively say, "Ah! Now we have it! We are done with this issue" any more than a person can say, "This is me. I'm set. No changes ever."

That said, it seems impossible to schedule a final meeting about Catholic identity. On the the other hand, the faculty has spent many past meetings taking a deeper look at the Catholic identity of the school. It is possible to have completed every meeting in every module of *As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity*. The end of the program has come. It does make sense to mark the occasion in some way.

As a result, the suggestion here for a meeting or for particular events is entitled **Sustaining Identity**. However you choose to mark the end of participation in *As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity*, the work now is to sustain it, keep it going, continue the awareness, define it again for new members of the community.

Here are some suggestions to mark this occasion.

1. A Faculty Meeting

Since *As We Teach and Learn: Recognizing Our Catholic Identity* primarily engages the faculty, they are the people who should reflect and celebrate this time. Faculty should be involved in the planning and implementation of this meeting.

Purpose:

To evalute growth in recognizing the key characteristics of Catholic identity

To celebrate accomplishments

To consider the sustaining dimension

Preparation:

1. Read through the entire plan for the meeting to organize and select activities which are appropriate.
2. Invite faculty members to write a brief reflection on the following questions:
   - What have I learned?

- What surprised me?
- What has changed in our school, my classroom as a result of the focus on Catholic identity?
- What was most difficult?
- What knowledge do we still need?

Ask teachers to turn in their responses ahead of the meeting. A teacher or principal can receive the reflections. Copy the notes for the whole faculty. (Let teachers know the notes will be copied. Names can be omitted.)

3. Each module might be represented by a sign or symbol. Ask teachers to bring something to the meeting which symbolizes one of the six characteristics or an activity or event that happened during the program. Let people use their imagination.
4. Invite one faculty member to serve as the reflector or discussion leader. The principal could also serve in this capacity.

The Meeting

Opening Prayer:

The beginning of the **Magnificat of Fidelity**[1]

Embrace, my soul
those who turn to God, wondering.
Companion, my spirit
those who are kind.
Age after age God summons witnesses.
Age after age people respond.
Age after age holiness seasons creation.
O God, you are that holiness,
lifted up, exalted, and celebrated by those who love you.

Discussion:

1. Allow time to read "reflection notes." The notes should present topics for discussion and reveal different responses. Let the notes shape the agenda for discussion. Take time with the conversation.
2. Consider sustaining: List all the synonyms for the word "sustaining" the group can suggest on a large piece of newsprint.

Discuss:

- What normal things do people do to "sustain" their lives?
- What things do we do to *sustain* our health? to *keep* our relationships *alive*?
- What *sustains* as teachers? What new things have we learned to *strengthen* our teaching? Who supports us? Nourishes us?

3. A little ceremony of symbols: Ask teachers to present the symbol they have chosen and tell what meaning it has for them. The items might then be grouped in the center of a table.

[1] Ann Johnson (1991). "Miryam of Jerusalem." *Teacher of the Disciples*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press.

4. Summarize: The person chosen ahead of time should help the group summarize the ideas from the discussion. Invite comments from any members of the group.
5. Planning (optional): If you choose to move from celebrating accomplishments to beginning a new planning cycle, that work would fit nicely here.

Closing Prayer: the conclusion of the **Magnificat of Fidelity**

You remember your saints and sages of old.
The good they accomplished lives on.
You sustain your saints and sages alive in the world today,
encouraging them, clearing their way.
You lift up those newly come to your teachings.
Like newborn babes you cherish them softly.
Clarify their plans, strengthen their efforts,
deepen their commitment.
Let them soar as though they flew on the wings of an eagle.
Let them run swiftly and never grow weary.
Let them learn well and find friendship among us
in order that they may walk the long walk
and never grow faint.
Grant a good life to the true of heart.
We cast our lot among them,
let none of us be put to shame.
'Blessed are you, our God, Loving Companion,
teacher of all you call to your side,
who sustains and encourages good people.'

2. Activities with Parents

Try an action research project. Mid-year, in anticipation of the conclusion of this program, interview parents about what they think makes a school Catholic. What are the signs and symbols they notice? What are they aware of? What do they expect? Bring the results of your interviews to the faculty. Share the information with parents at one of their meetings. What work is left to do? Make a plan for future activities.

3. Activities with Students

Ask students: what they think makes a school Catholic. Plan an assembly for Catholic Schools Week, or the closing school assembly and ask students to depict their understandings in some way—drama, art, song.

4. A Concept Chart

Post a Concept Chart on the faculty room wall, in classrooms or in the central office. To keep key concepts fresh and alive, post a chart of the characteristics you have studied. Refer back to the concepts from time to time, when they naturally come up in discussion. Other characteristics might be added to the chart.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Assessment of the Catholicity of the School

School Planning Form

Directions: Each participant will need a copy of the completed Summary Form. Take some time to look at the perceptions of your faculty colleagues as summarized on the form. Working as a group and using newsprint to show responses, address the following questions.

STRENGTHS

1. Which areas appear to be areas of strength?
2. List some activities, behaviors, events, etc., which clearly show that these areas are being implemented in various classrooms and school-wide.
3. How can we continue to keep these areas strong?
4. Do our "publics" know about these areas of strength? List some ways we could increase their awareness.

FOCUS

1. Which areas appear to be areas of challenge?
2. Why?
3. Do we see this as a need? Do we need more information?
3. What could help us address these (i.e., inservice*, resources, etc.)?
4. List some activities, events, behaviors, etc., which exemplify these areas.
5. Discuss ways in which these areas could be implemented in classrooms, school-wide.

NEXT STEP

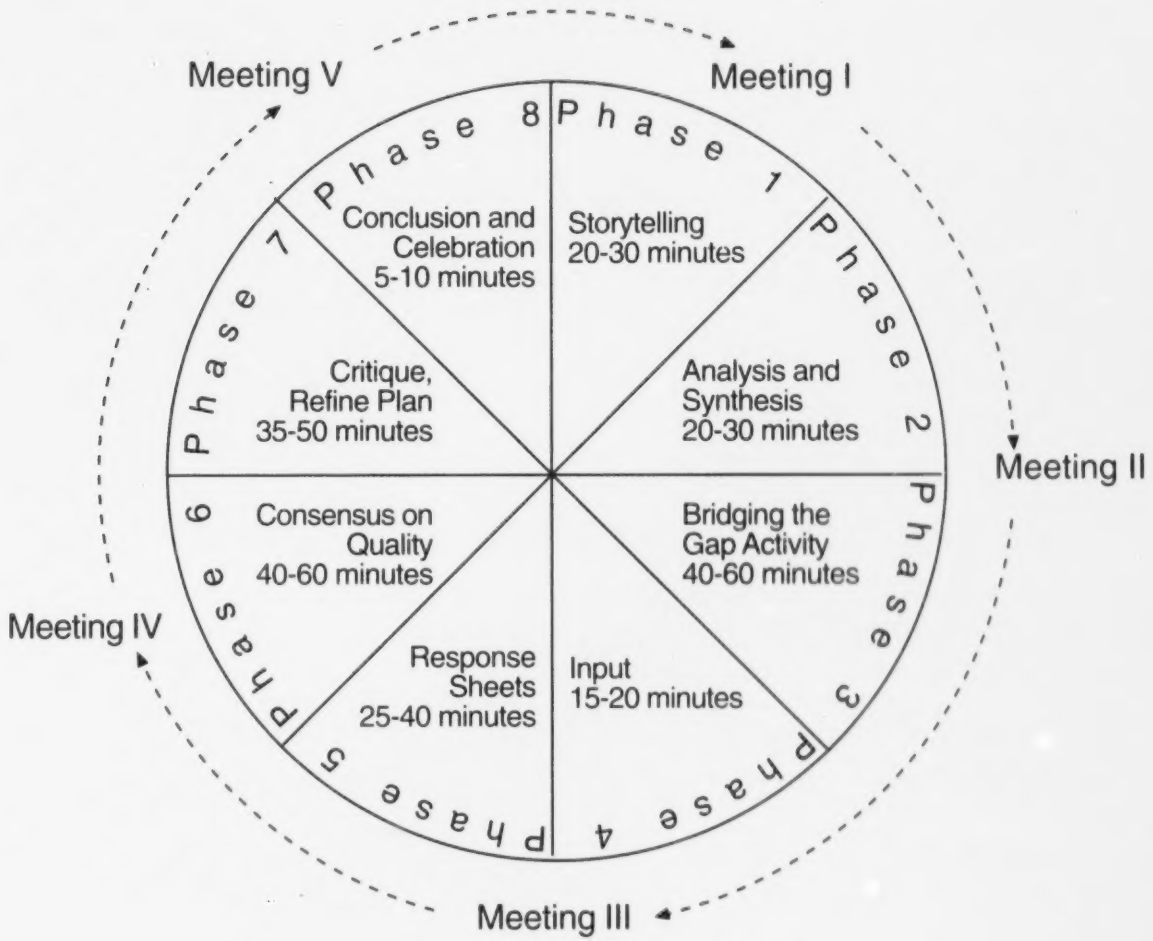
1. What is our next step? Make a plan of action which includes: What, Who, When, How, $. Think: What is our desired outcome in this area?

** NCEA has developed modules for each major area of assessment*

©1997 NCEA

Appendix A.1

Module Design



This cycle is based on the 4MAT System, developed by Bernice McCarthy, Ph.D., Excel, Inc. (23385 Old Barrington Road, Barrington, IL 60010).

©1997 NCEA

Appendix A.2

Mind Map Worksheet

©1997 NCEA

Appendix B

Bridging the Gap:
What Are the Connections?

Mature Person **Faith Community**

Pantomime, Role-Play or Illustrate
An Activity
That the Mature Person Engages In
That Strengthens the Faith Community

©1997 NCEA

Appendix C

Processing Questions

—If participants saw the video, reflect on:

What images did you see in the video?

Why were these images used?

What did the video say to you about our life together as a faith community?

—If participants did not see the video, reflect on:

What did the speaker say that surprised you?

What did the speaker say that challenged you?

What did the speaker say that you would like to challenge?

What did the speaker say to you about our life together as a faith community?

©1997 NCEA

Appendix D

Personal Reflection Questions

Reflect on the following questions from each of these perspectives: personal; interpersonal; instructional; and organizational.

Open-minded

- Am I open-minded and receptive to people with new ideas?
- Am I able to compromise realistically?
- Can I do things the way another person suggests?
- Do I share something of myself, my feelings and ideas, with others?

Constructively critical

- Have I eliminated the "shoulds" and "oughts" from my vocabulary when I am speaking about other people?
- Do I respect the feelings and the experiences of others?

Tolerant

- Can I be accommodating and still maintain my self-respect?
- Do I avoid condescending attitudes toward others?

Reasonable

- Do I reason things through rather than act on impulse?
- Do I listen to the full story before drawing my conclusions?
- Am I able to give others the benefit of the doubt?

Courteous

- Do I listen attentively when others are speaking or am I just waiting for my turn to talk?
- Am I considerate of others in my use of language and the tone and pitch of my voice?
- Do I avoid the use of sarcasm when others do not share my views?

Cooperative

- Do I try to understand another's position, even though I may not agree with it?
- Can I work well with others in a group?
- Can I accept the leadership of others?
- Do I lead by example as well as by words?

©1997 NCEA

Appendix E

Reflection Response Sheet

How do I want people in this faith community to remember me?

What do I most want to pass on to the students in this faith community?

How can this school as an organization better reflect who we are as a faith community?

I promise myself I will:

©1997 NCEA

Appendix F.1

Action Plan Form:
Enhancing The Faith Community Element
Of Our Catholic Identity

Qualities We Have Chosen to Enhance/Develop_____

	What Will Be Done	By Whom	By When	How Will We Know When We Have Achieved the Goal
Personal/ Interpersonal Level				
Instructional Level				
Organizational Level				

©1997 NCEA

Appendix F.2

Evaluation Sheet

Objective and Target Date	Achievements	Further Steps

©1997 NCEA

Order Form

This order from allows you to obtain more copies of any of the modules or the assessment packets.

1. Module 01—The Faith Community
by Jean Wincek, CSJ, and
Colleen O'Malley, CSJ
(set of 10)
$48 member/$64 nonmember

2. Module 02—Faith Development
by Angela Ann Zukowski,
MHSH, D.Min.
(set of 10)
$48 member/$64 nonmember

3. Module 03—Religion Curriculum Articulation
by Elinor R. Ford, Ph.D. and
Sheila Rae Durante, RSM
(set of 10)
$48 member/$64 nonmember

4. Module 04—Service Learning
by Bill Grace Ph.D.
(set of 10)
$48 member/$64 nonmember

5. Module 05—Prayer and Liturgy Integration
by Pat Bartle
(set of 10)
$48 member/$64 nonmember

6. Module 06—Social Justice
by James and Kathleen McGinnis
Includes one copy of *Education for Peace and Justice: Religious Dimensions, Grades K-6* and *Education for Peace and Justice: Religious Dimensions, Grades 7-12*.
(set of 10)
$48 member/$64 nonmember

7. Assessment Packet
Contains ten assessments.
(set of 10)
$24 member/$32 nonmember

Module # Name	Qty In Sets	Price Per Set	Total $

Total enclosed $_____
Total to be billed(shipping charges will be added) $_____

From:
Name _____
School _____
Address _____
City_____ State_____ Zip _____
Tele: _____

Send this order form to:
The National Catholic Educational Association
ATTN: Publications Office
1077 30th Street, N.W.
Suite 100
Washington, DC 20007-3852

or FAX this order form to:
202-333-6706
ATTN: Publications Office

Or Call: 202-337-6232

Jean Wmeek, CSJ, and Colleen O'Malley, CSJ, work as a team. They are certified presenters of the 4MAT® System and consultants for educational theory and technology for Excel, Inc., in Chicago.

They also do adjunct teaching in the School of Education at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN, and in the School of Graduate and Special Programs at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

In addition to their work with Excel, Inc., and their graduate teaching, they consult on governance issues, conflict resolution, school culture and strategic planning for Catholic schools.

Jean holds a doctoral degree in educational leadership and Colleen has an educational specialist degree from the University of St. Thomas.

Both Jean and Colleen have been teachers and administrators in Catholic schools.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The National Catholic Educational Association
1077 30th Street, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20007-3852
202-337-6232

#9